

Report of the Town Center Committee
For the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee was tasked with making recommendations for the possible redevelopment of parcels comprising the Reston Parkway Metro Station area and Town Center North. We are pleased to report that there was a good deal of consensus for the vision and organizing principles that are embodied in this report. The Committee without exception believes the essential emphasis should be the creation of dynamic, mixed used, urban spaces that will make the Reston Town Center Metro Station (and we think that should be its name) a signature regional destination and origination station. Going forward, this will require a stronger emphasis on creating a healthier residential:non-residential balance consistent with transit-oriented development (TOD). Proper incentives will be needed to achieve these outcomes, particularly since much of this area is already built to or near existing density limits.

The annexed straw man map reflects the essential themes comprising the Committee's recommendations. The straw man (which would not become part of the Comprehensive Plan) is but one way to reflect and achieve the goals we recommend. Other configurations and designs are possible and may be more merit worthy. What results on the ground will be the product of the normal planning and zoning processes as guided by the revisions to the Comprehensive Plan that this report will generate.

Given time constraints, the Committee chose to especially focus on three sub-areas within the larger study area (as reflected on the straw man). It is our sense that these sub-areas are the most likely to redevelop in the near term (and we will use these defined terms throughout this report): **TC Metro North** (land units D4 and D5 and the Vornado parcel on land unit D3), **TC Metro South** (land units E3, 4, and 5), and **Town Center North or TCN** (that portion of land unit D1 that is bounded by Town Center and Reston Parkways, Baron Cameron Drive, and the Town Center District center-north boundary). To a lesser extent we have also considered the key implications for the legally defined **Town Center District** (also outlined on the straw man) and we've noted those more general observations in the report. Parcels that are within the study area but outside these primary areas of focus could be considered in Phase II of the Task Force's work if and as necessary.

Exhibits A and B detail the vision we see for each of these areas. In summary:

TC Metro North: If a vibrant destination-origination station is to be realized then the Committee feels that the existing Town Center urban core (essentially the area bounded by Reston, New Dominion, and Town Center Parkways and Bluemont Way) must be extended south through land units D3, 4, and 5 to the Metro station.

Land unit D4, as the touchdown point north of the Toll Road for the Metro, will be of special significance. An idea that generated strong Committee interest is creation of a single or perhaps even multi-level platform on this land unit with a contemporary urban plaza on the top level. That plaza would be directly accessible from the Metro via an extension of the Metro pedestrian bridge and from new vehicular roadways off Sunset

Hills Drive. Most vehicular traffic, however, would be funneled under the platform, where parking would be created. The urban plaza would create opportunities for signature retail, new restaurants and nightlife, possibly a hotel function with convention capability to complement existing and future hotel inventory, potentially a public amenity of some import, and additional office/commercial. Strong north-south connectivity is recommended, though there are some physical challenges with creating these links. These challenges, combined with the costs of building the platform, locating a healthy balance of residential, ensuring adequate open space and space potentially for an important public amenity, will require very strong incentives to the developer if this vision is to become a reality. The Committee feels the benefits to greater Reston of extending the urban core and creating this vibrant downtown with true TOD justify the approach we recommend.

With respect to the rest of the Town Center District the Committee is not recommending any significant changes. This will allow for a tapering of densities as one moves north from the Metro station. In terms of the District's character, however, we recommend that parcels with existing residential development maintain that character going forward. Add to these the proposed redevelopment of the Spectrum parcel and our recommendations for Town Center North and this will encourage greater residential development around the extended urban core or downtown (perhaps higher than the residential:office ratio we recommend for TC Metro North and South, with supporting retail). This will help ensure balanced TOD within the Town Center District.

TC Metro South: We think it highly unlikely these parcels will develop into an extended Town Center urban core given the limited north-south connectivity across the Toll Road (at least not before air rights at the station are developed). This will not change even if the Town Center Parkway extension is realized (and Committee members have heard there are apparently significant engineering challenges associated with that recommendation). Consistent with the overall theme for the Metro Station area, however, we think it is essential that this area be transformed from its current suburban office park paradigm into a more urban, mixed-use space consistent with TOD. It is important to emphasize that we are not starting from scratch here. This area was zoned exclusively industrial; there is no existing residential and there are existing and substantial commercial buildings already here. Consequently, to achieve the Committee's vision for a mixed use environment with at least a 1:1 sq. ft. residential:office balance, which we recommend, with new links creating better intra- and inter-parcel connectivity, and essential open space (including a significant central green space that we see as an important orienting feature for this land bay, a difficult challenge given that multiple landowners would have to cooperate on such a project), there will have to be adequate incentives provided. In return the community will receive significant benefits – the transformation of this land bay from what is and will otherwise remain a suburban office park to a vibrant mixed-use area with a strong central green space.

Town Center North: We feel this should develop into a more urban, mixed-use parcel organized around a strong emphasis on open space – as with Metro South, we recommend creation of a meaningful central green space or “town green” – and a

consolidated but strong government function. There will be opportunities for supporting retail as well as office/commercial but there must be a focused commitment to bringing residential to this area. Even though this parcel is beyond the ½ mile radius, a Town Center bus circulator or linear shuttle service – something we view as essential to tying this all together and mitigating traffic throughout what would be a larger and even more dynamic downtown – will support the residential opportunity this parcel presents.

Increased FARs: In return for meeting the development conditions we recommend (and any other requirements, including proffers, that result from the normal rezoning process) and achieving the important community benefits outlined in this report, the Committee recommends that the County have the flexibility to grant FAR increases of *up to* 5.0 for TC Metro North and South and 0.9 for non-residential uses in TCN. Three essential points should be emphasized:

- (1) **In no event is the Committee recommending that a 5.0 FAR attach as a matter of right to any individual parcel.** Up to a 5.0 FAR (in the case of TC Metro North and South) would be an *available option* in a rezoning that meets the criteria and vision set forth in this report but in no event would it be available by right. Developers are being extended an option: if your plan meets the conditions precedent then the option of increasing density levels beyond existing by-right levels may be considered.
- (2) **If no rezoning application for an individual parcel is ever received and/or approved then that parcel stays with existing by-right zoning.** Further, the County need only award so much of an increase as is necessary to achieve the development in the plan that it approves. Put differently, a plan that proposes mixed-use consistent with this report that requires an FAR increase from, say, an existing by-right 1.0 to a 3.5 would be approved at 3.5, not 5.0. The result is that 5.0 would not attach as a matter of right to any rezoned parcel. The density limit could be increased to whatever level is required, not more, to achieve the particular plan that is the subject of the individual zoning application.
- (3) **The Committee uniformly feels that good projects and not FAR limits should drive decisions.** Consequently, the Committee wanted to set limits sufficiently high that they would not be an impediment to realizing the vision we have set forth, remembering that all of the parcels in TC Metro North and South already have significant commercial development on the ground. There is nowhere to put the new, TOD residential development we would like to see unless in almost all cases existing commercial development is torn down. A majority of the Committee feels that development will not get torn down and replaced by new development with a minimum 50% residential SF requirement if there are not very material incentives of the kind we recommend.

COMMITTEE METHODOLOGY

It should be emphasized from the outset that the Committee did not attempt to write Comprehensive Plan language. This is a Committee report; it reflects the Committee's points of consensus on how we think the Town Center Metro Station area should develop and what incentives will be required to achieve that vision. We think a smaller group of individuals with the appropriate expertise will be required to distill from this report, as adopted and/or modified by the Task Force, those items that must then be translated into proposed text for the Comprehensive Plan.

With limited resources and time, the Committee adopted a collaborative model for doing its work. Each meeting included an opportunity for public input on matters before the Committee (and sometimes matters that were not). Individual landowners were invited to participate and, to their credit, they (like many members of the public) have faithfully attended the Committee meetings and offered extremely helpful ideas and recommendations. We have also heard from County staff on topics ranging from the RMAG recommendations for Town Center, to the County Parks Authority on open space, to staff on general planning issues and the interdepartmental dialogue that has been ongoing the last couple of years concerning the future development of County uses in Town Center North. The Committee's meeting summaries, a part of the public record, reflect all of the individuals who appeared before the Committee to offer input.

The Committee wishes to thank each and every person who has so patiently attended our meetings and offered input. To the extent this report is able to make a constructive contribution to the important community dialogue is testament to the incredibly thoughtful input we received from so many.

THE ESSENTIAL FRAMEWORK: DELIVERY OF GRID, GREEN, EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN, AND 1:1 RESIDENTIAL:OFFICE TO QUALIFY FOR HIGHER FARs

To achieve the Committee's vision for vibrant, balanced, mixed use, TOD throughout the Town Center Metro Station area, the Committee has identified four minimum criteria that it believes must be satisfied as the conditions precedent for increasing commercial densities above those permitted under existing zoning:

- *Intra- and inter-parcel connectivity.* In some cases an urban-style grid may be appropriate; in others a less elaborate but still essential network of links is needed. In all cases emphasis should be placed on pedestrian and bicycle access and use.
- *Adequate open space must be planned from the outset.* We heard from the County Parks Authority staff that central greens, while often difficult to plan and creating myriad other challenges in areas with multiple parcels and landowners, are highly desirable with rich social utility. Our recommendations include major central greens in both TCN and Metro South – augmented by other pockets of open space to meet multiple needs.

- *Excellence in urban design and architecture must be required* if the option of significant increases in density is to be allowed. All development that benefits from the increased density option will justifiably have high expectations for design excellence, but land unit D4 deserves special mention. This will be the touchdown lot from the Metro into the extended urban core. The design and architecture of that space must speak to the uniqueness of Town Center and signal the sense of place and regional destination this report seeks to encourage.
- *Creating a healthy residential:non-residential mix.* The Committee, as discussed further below, recommends that a 1:1 sq. ft., residential:office ratio be required if the increased density option is allowed.

The open space and 1:1 requirements in particular received extended discussion amongst the Committee. We consider each separately now to offer some additional insights into the Committee's thinking and recommendations.

The Open Space Requirements and Reconsidering the Urban Parks Standard

As TC Metro South is rezoned an open space standard will have to be applied. And while Town Center open space is currently master planned, any rezoning of TC Metro North as well as TCN raises the issue as well. The County Urban Parks Standard would be one possibility of how to measure adequate open space in these land bays. That standard contemplates 1 acre of open space for every 10,000 workers and 1.5 acres for every 1,000 residents.

Included with this report is an interactive density chart that allows one to project density levels and open space requirements under the existing Urban Parks Standard by adjusting the FAR placeholder in the spreadsheet. Consider:

- **Built out at a 3.5 FAR and 1:1 SF residential:office ratio, and assuming 2 residents per dwelling unit,¹ Metro North and South combined would be required to yield 34 acres of open space under the Urban Parks Standard, which equates to 22% of total acreage.**
- **Increasing the FAR to 5.0 would require almost 50 acres of open space for Metro North and South combined, which equates to 31% of total acreage.**

Our sense is that the philosophy behind the Urban Parks Standard may be appropriate for TOD areas like Town Center but that the mathematical formula used to calculate open space may need to be reconsidered for these high-density areas. We recognize that this issue affects the other station areas as well and requires additional and coordinated study. At least with respect to any area that is the subject of this report that chooses to seek the higher densities, we recommend that the following broad principles:

1. As a starting point, the property that is the subject of a zoning application should be required to provide "functional open space" that equals +/- 20% of

¹ Two persons per dwelling unit for high-rise residential (above five stories) is the standard used to calculate densities under the Reston PRC Ordinance, so we use it here.

the parcel's total acreage. By "functional open space" we mean urban plazas, outdoor active recreational areas, publicly accessible roof top space (e.g., for tennis or multi-use courts, recognizing this space is not free and presents accessibility challenges), and storm water ponds so long as they are extended with buffer park area and are not just the ponds themselves. By contrast streets, typical street sidewalks, and medians should not qualify as "functional open space." Wider-than-normal sidewalks with tree pits, other plantings, and/or benches that are integral to an urban plaza or boulevard setting might qualify.

2. The character, quality, and location of open space are especially important factors to consider and, in appropriate circumstances, might justify a relaxation of open space requirements on individual parcels. An example would be the centrally located, contiguous, and publicly accessible green spaces in TCN and TC Metro South that we recommend.² These are shared spaces that serve important community needs and have a high social utility. Locating these central green spaces should be given high priority. Consequently:
 - a. Zoning applications for both areas should define the location, size, and maintenance responsibility for the central green space along the lines recommended in this report. For any zoning application that incorporates less than all of the central green area, the applicant(s) must: (a) demonstrate how the proposed development will allow for (and not preclude) the phased augmentation and implementation of the central green space, and (b) provide notice to neighboring landowners who are part of the solution proposed in the individual zoning application so they can participate in that process and provide the County with the full context to evaluate the feasibility/desirability of the central green solution proposed.
 - b. In TC Metro South in particular, all landowners will benefit from this shared public space so all should be required to contribute in some way to the solution. Multiple landowners should be required to provide land for that solution; no one landowner should be made to bear that entire burden. Landowners who do not provide land should be required to contribute in other ways to ensure that the burden of creating this important space is equitably shared throughout the land bay.
3. Central greens are a shared public space that can serve multiple active and passive needs. Consequently, for those parcels that contribute to the central green solution, an adjustment to that parcel's remaining open space requirements may be appropriate – both as incentive to participate in the central green solution and in recognition of the shared nature and high social utility of these kind of spaces. Not all adjustments should be the same; the size and nature of the contribution made to the central green solution should guide the amount of any adjustment to a particular parcel's other open space requirements.

² The green space may be bifurcated by a road as depicted in the straw man. But it should be essentially contiguous if not entirely so.

4. The current County Urban Parks Standard also contemplates the formulaic addition of new ball fields as residential and commercial populations increase. These uses require significant amounts of land. We don't think those are appropriate open space uses in the areas that are the subject of this report. That does not eliminate the need for new ball fields, but those spaces should be located outside these areas. We recognize the challenges in finding that additional space and point to this as one of the infrastructure impacts that must be considered on a broader scale by the entire Task Force.

Designating and preserving adequate open space has rightly been a signature hallmark of Reston's development and we feel it must be an essential component of the community's redevelopment. The priority this Committee has placed on securing large central greens in the spaces it has reviewed (augmented by other pockets of open space), and the concepts we propose above, reflect that sense of priority.

The 1:1 Requirement

Research suggests that achieving higher residential densities at TOD sites where there already is a strong commercial component is perhaps the primary challenge facing a community. (*See Station Area Planning -- How to Make Great Transit-Oriented Places*, Report of the Non-Profit Reconnecting America and the Center for Transit-Oriented Development, at p. 8 (link at <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/show/tod202>)). This is precisely the situation that confronts us in the Town Center Metro Station area (the result of organic development and that residential was not permitted in the RCIG).

The key questions for the Committee were: 1) what is considered a "healthy" mix of residential:commercial, and 2) what if anything should we say about encouraging that mix? There is no easy answer to either of these questions.

George Mason University demographers provided the Task Force with existing and projected jobs:households data throughout the Northern Virginia Metro corridor. The numbers vary significantly. But when asked which existing station provides the most desirable mix (i.e., one that creates healthy mixed use and also mitigates traffic impacts), GMU's demographers cited Ballston's 4:1 jobs: household ratio as the best example (noting that in the Ballston area traffic along Wilson Boulevard has actually decreased in volume in recent years). That translates to a roughly 1:1 square foot ratio, residential:office.³ In addition, the Committee learned that the Crystal City

³ If one assumes 4 workers per @ 1200 sq. ft. of office space and 1200 sq. ft. per dwelling unit in an urban area like that conceived for Town Center, a 4:1 jobs: household standard converts to approximately 1:1 sq. ft. residential:office (indeed, that is Ballston's current ratio per the existing data). John Carter provided the Committee with the following benchmarks:

Office = one job per 250 square feet

Retail = one job per 400 square feet

Industrial = one job per 450 square feet

Other = one job per 500 square feet

Each dwelling unit equals 1,250 square feet including lobbies, corridors and mechanical space (which compares to an 1100 sf figure many Committee members have used as a benchmark for high-rise

redevelopment plan that Arlington County recently approved also adopts a 1:1 residential:office SF ratio as its guideline for mixed use TOD development. Neither Ballston nor Crystal City is Town Center, but many on the Committee see helpful analogs there. And Ballston is not a theoretical case of successful, mixed-use TOD but one that exists now on the ground – an important factor in the Committee’s thinking.

In addition, and consistent with the Ballston and Crystal City examples, the Committee feels that hotel and retail should be treated outside the ratio:

- Hotel typically tends to act like residential in terms of traffic impacts. Convention space may not, but the Committee decided against complicating the standard by treating convention space differently from other hotel space.
- Retail, especially in the key downtown-like areas, should be encouraged. But we learned that getting appropriate retail developed and located can present some challenges and is typically more expensive to build and manage than other commercial space. Keeping retail outside the ratio, therefore, provides some incentive in this regard.

It is this 1:1 standard (a minimum of 1 SF of residential for every 1 SF of office) the Committee has adopted as an appropriate *minimum* guideline for future development within the Town Center Metro Station area (a slightly modified version of this standard was adopted for TCN). With the Station area currently at 15:1 jobs:households according to GMU, a 1:1 SF ratio (which, again, translates to an approximately 4:1 jobs:household ratio) will significantly bend the curve to create what we see as a more desirable residential:non-residential mix for what will be a more urban, mixed-use transit area that will also have the hallmarks of a true destination-origination station.

To implement that standard, the Committee recommends several important qualifications:

- In a perfect world, residential and commercial would develop simultaneously or nearly so. The markets for the two, however, rarely track one another. Further, what can often be more profitable commercial development must often precede the residential to provide sufficient returns on investment to permit the residential building. Finally, requiring that at least some minimal amount of residential be built before commercial may proceed could mean that those buildings must be torn down once the market allows the more fulsome development, a very expensive proposition. Weighing these challenges, the Committee has recommended that zoning applications that seek FARs higher than those for which the land unit is currently zoned must include at least the 1:1 ratio, but residential need not be built at the same time. It can await market conditions that permit that building, although plans must demonstrate how phased implementation will be achieved. This ensures the creation of residential land

development). Exempting hotel and retail from the calculation and assuming more office than industrial in and around Town Center, we have taken an average of +/- 300 sf of non-residential and +/- 1200 sf per dwelling unit to get to the 1:1. When we use the term “office” in this report in connection with this ratio we mean all commercial development other than residential, hotel, and retail.

banks that must be used for that purpose so that, over time, the development will get to at least the 1:1 ratio.

- The land banks that are designated, however, must have a bona fide chance of becoming residential development once the market allows for that development. Consequently, proposals that keep land fallow and available for residential development once the market allows will be looked at with the highest favor. Those that designate existing commercial buildings as future residential sites could be allowed but will appropriately be given heightened scrutiny (given the concern that those buildings might never get redeveloped into the residential that we feel is essential to ensuring healthy mixed use).
- In addition, requiring a 1:1 on especially smaller parcels that are already fully or nearly fully built out commercial may well prevent the future redevelopment of those parcels. That is not a desirable outcome. The Committee, therefore, is recommending that “any property” within Metro North and South that is the subject of a zoning application – whether a single or joint/collaborative application – will be subject to the 1:1 standard. This will allow developers the flexibility to work amongst themselves in apportioning the residential and commercial mixes so long as the Metro Station area overall gets to at least a 1:1 ratio.
- The standard we are proposing is a residential minimum or floor, not a ceiling. Thus any zoning application that seeks to build residential at a higher-than-1:1 ratio would be acceptable, but no zoning application that seeks to build office at something higher than the 1:1 should be allowed. Further, while the residential minimum is always required if office is part of the development plan, there is no requirement that commercial be built. An application that seeks to build exclusively or primarily residential on a given parcel would be permissible (though any such application must be weighed against the other objectives this report seeks to achieve).
- Finally, creating an urban, mixed-use environment (and, in the case of TC Metro North, creating an extended downtown) that will mitigate certain of the traffic impacts of increased growth are among the multiple objectives served by requiring some kind of residential:office ratio. As GMU’s demographers noted, this is anything but an exact science. Consequently, we recommend that the County periodically review and assess the achievement of these goals by analyzing trends and recommend if adjustments in this ratio to better achieve the goals are warranted.

Included with this report is the minority report of Committee Member Joe Stowers who advanced a recommendation for an even stronger 4:1 SF target. This standard would be designed to ultimately get the *jobs:workers* ratio in 1:1 balance throughout the Town Center Metro Station area. We also received public input from Reston 2020 and a Reston 2020 member (Terry Maynard) suggesting a 2 and 2.5:1 ratio respectively, which argues for at least a 1:1 or nearly 1:1 jobs:workers balance for new development going forward (assuming 1.6 workers per household). The essential theory animating these proposals is that if the number of jobs in the immediate area is roughly in

equal balance with the number of workers living in that same area there will be much less traffic impacts than if those number are not in equal balance.

The Committee gave a great deal of consideration to these important inputs but a majority decided in favor of the 1:1 standard. Its reasons include:

- The Committee's vision for the Town Center Metro Station area is premised on the belief that, properly redeveloped, this area will have even stronger destination appeal. The Committee is unaware of any established authority on TOD who suggests that a 1:1 jobs:workers ratio is the desirable standard when one is trying to create the kind of dynamic space we envision for Town Center. Indeed, we are concerned that overloading residential could actually inhibit that vision, which by necessity will require a strong commercial as well as residential presence. No vibrant, urban downtown we are aware of is premised on a 1:1 jobs:workers ratio. Of course this means that workers from somewhere will have to be imported, but that is part of the promise of Metro – it will help alleviate some of these traffic impacts.
- This is not to say that the Greater Reston area more broadly should be subject to a 1:1 ratio. We are talking about a ratio that we think makes sense only for the land units closest to the Town Center Metro Station, all of which are within or intersected by the ¼ mile radius. When considering a wider demographic area that is not designed to be urban and/or a regional destination then a higher residential:office ratio may well be more appropriate. In that regard, we think there is a difference in traffic impacts between importing workers to Town Center from elsewhere in Greater Reston (using internal Reston arteries and hopefully bus service) versus workers coming from outside Greater Reston and using the external vehicular arteries to get here.
- Third, according to the GMU data, the Town Center Station area is currently at 15:1 jobs:households (which is almost 9.5:1 jobs:workers). By requiring that TC Metro North and South be redeveloped at a 1:1 SF ratio we would bend this curve almost *fourfold*. So at 1:1, a paradigm the GMU demographers tell us is already working well on the ground in Ballston, we may be able to significantly mitigate the traffic impacts – especially if other areas outside TC Metro North and South develop with heavier residential.
- Finally, as referenced in the attached density chart, at just a 3.5 FAR for Metro North and South we will allow for a minimum of almost 10,000 new residential units; at 5.0 that minimum grows to over 14,000. Add in new residential at TCN and Spectrum (and our recommendation that a strong residential collar around the urban core be maintained/augmented) and there is the potential for a minimum (remember, the 1:1 is a minimum ratio) for greater than 10-15,000 new residential units in the Town Center Metro Station area – *which at the upper end is double what GMU projects as new unit demand in this same area through 2050*. So at 1:1 we are not talking about an insignificant amount of residential development. At 2.5 or 4:1 the Committee is concerned that the vision we have for this area will not be achieved.

THREE ADDITIONAL ITEMS BEYOND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

There are three items that are technically beyond the scope of any Comprehensive Plan amendment but that nonetheless received Committee attention and are worth mentioning.

Identifying this Transit Station as the Reston Town Center Metro Station

A consensus quickly formed within the Committee that this station should be known as the Reston Town Center Metro Station:

- Our entire vision is premised on this being a regional destination. The destination is not Reston Parkway – it is Reston Town Center.
- Reston Town Center is already a regionally (indeed, internationally) known brand with a unique identity. Building that brand is good for Reston and Fairfax County.

In short, this name marries two important considerations: it keeps “Reston” in the name while highlighting the known destination (“Town Center”) that we want to highlight.

Pedestrian Crossing Across the Toll Road Essentially Linking Plaza America with Westin/Sheraton

This appears to technically fall within the Committee’s jurisdiction, but due to time constraints we did not focus on areas outside Metro North and South along/near the Toll Road. We are told, however, that MWAA must make a decision on this proposed connection before the tracks are laid or else construction of this pedestrian crossing will be much harder to achieve and will be much more expensive.

Even without extensive consideration the Committee feels it important to strongly endorse this proposed crossing. As the broader Town Center Metro Station area develops there will be even greater priority than now exists on creating effective north-south links across/over/under the Toll Road and Metro tracks. Their priority must be weighed with other infrastructure priorities that new development will trigger, but a pedestrian crossing here is something we strongly endorse.

Using Town Center Redevelopment as Opportunities for Sustainable Development and “Green Streets” Funding

Whether or not appropriate to include in the Comprehensive Plan, the Committee wants to make explicit its strong support for seeing redevelopment that is the subject of this report as an important opportunity for sustainable development and “green streets” type funding. Town Center has earned its reputation as a unique place; it was the product of imaginative thinking that was on many levels the “first of its kind.” Seeing redevelopment that is the subject of this report as excellent opportunities for sustainable development and green streets funding is a natural extension of that kind of imaginative, first-of-its kind thinking that will keep Town Center an interesting, relevant, and unique place as it evolves.

ITEMS NOT ADDRESSED OR REQUIRING FURTHER STUDY

There are several significant items the Committee does not address in this report or that, to the extent referenced, require additional consideration. A number of these items could significantly impact the feasibility of our recommendations:

Infrastructure Needs Assessment: The Committee has carefully outlined a number of important infrastructure improvements within the areas we studied (detailed in Exhibits A and B), but adoption of the Committee's recommendations will unquestionably create additional pressure on Reston's existing infrastructure outside these study areas. When combined with what might be recommended from the Wiehle and Herndon-Monroe Committees the impacts could be very significant. At some point there must be an impact/needs assessment of the Task Force recommendations, something that is clearly beyond the scope of this Committee. That kind of assessment should be done before zoning changes and the kinds of development we are proposing should be allowed to move forward.

Air Rights Development: A number of residents urged the Committee to consider various air rights development alternatives at the Town Center Metro Station. Air rights development at this station would unquestionably alter the vision we propose, starting with greater north-south connectivity over the Toll Road, additional footprint that could allow for more open space, and incorporating certain parcels within Metro South into an even more extended Town Center urban core. We feel there will be ample opportunity to revise the vision we recommend to accommodate air rights development when air rights development becomes a reality. Consequently, we have not spent scarce time studying possible air rights configurations/opportunities.

The Committee, however, feels strongly that MWAA should be encouraged to embed now the pylons needed to pursue future air rights development – in short, to preserve that future potential. Failing to do so will all but eliminate the ability to change that decision later (an MWAA representative advised that doing this once the station is constructed will significantly add to the engineering and economic challenges).

Town Center is – and if our recommendations are adopted will further become – a unique place along the Northern Virginia rail corridor. Air rights development will be essential to the next stage of Town Center's evolution following the one we are defining in this report. Consequently, the Committee urges that MWAA move forward with embedding the pylons now.

Zoning Changes: Zoning for TC Metro South will have to be changed to permit the mixed-use vision we are recommending. In addition, an important component of our recommendations is encouraging a healthier residential:non-residential balance consistent with TOD best practices. If adopted, this will significantly increase residential densities in and around the Town Center District, potentially beyond that which would be permitted under existing zoning. Beyond market factors residential development in the Town Center District is essentially subject to two "caps": a Town Center District cap of

50 dwelling units per acre and the Reston PRC Ordinance overall cap of 13 persons per acre. Our sense is much of Reston feels that Town Center, planned from the outset as Reston's urban downtown, is an appropriate location for higher, urban densities associated with the arrival of Metro. Town Center's existing residential density caps, however, may prevent realization of some of the future residential potential this report seeks to encourage. Consequently, it is worth considering whether, for the Town Center District, zoning different from that otherwise applicable to the Reston PRC should be adopted and/or whether flexibility should be created to permit exceptions from the Reston PRC Ordinance for Town Center redevelopment consistent with the vision we propose.

Road Characteristics

In Exhibits A and B the Committee makes specific recommendations for certain road improvements. But this is an area that deserves additional study. Suggested road improvements should be appropriate to the primary purpose the road serves. As but one example, on-street parking may well be appropriate for certain local streets interior to the Town Center District, TC Metro South, or TCN. Conversely, on-street parking would not be appropriate for major conveyer streets or boulevards that move large volumes of vehicular traffic to and from these land bays.

Pages 45-56 of the Comprehensive Plan concerning Tyson's Corner have extensive language on street types, functions, and corresponding characteristics. We think the final text plan language the County adopts for the areas that are the subject of this report should include guidance on streets that is similar to that contained in these pages concerning Tyson's Corner.

Governance

This is a topic that is beyond the Committee's charter but on which there are some strong feelings within the Committee. It is also a topic that generated some strong community input at our meetings. It undoubtedly deserves wider consideration in a more appropriate forum, but there are several items that grew out of our discussions that are worth mentioning here:

- Within the Town Center Metro Station area there are two areas that are not presently subject to a master property association: TCN (and the Reston Office Building parcel adjacent the Spectrum parcel) and TC Metro South. Both are envisioned for new residential and publicly available open space areas.
- Whether either need be subject to a master property association as an interim layer of governance between the landowners and the County is a matter on which there appears to be some difference of opinion within the Committee. The Committee agrees, however, that:
 - o There should not be a proliferation of master property associations. If it is decided that parcels within these land units should be required to be part of a master association then it should be the Reston Town Center Association (RTCA) or Reston Association (RA) that is considered. In

all events the Committee feels that new master associations are not desirable.

- As to TCN and the Reston Office Building parcels, which are essentially surrounded by the Town Center District, if any part of these parcels are somehow required to become part of a master association for design review or other purposes then the RTCA – and not some other or new association – would be the appropriate association in the interests of consistency and continuity.
- Most on the Committee feel that the recommended central green spaces in TCN and TC Metro South should in all events be available for general use by anyone who lives in Reston if not beyond. Consequently, those spaces should be operated as public or quasi-public spaces. It is the Committee's sense that private interests may be in a better position financially than the County to ensure that these spaces are maintained as premier open spaces for the community's benefit and enjoyment. Consequently, strong consideration should be given to keeping the central greens under private ownership (including that of a private association).

EXHIBIT A

Town Center Metro North and South

Executive Summary

The Committee believes that new development at or near the Reston Town Center Metro Station represents an important opportunity upon which the community should be eager to capitalize. Given time constraints, the Committee gave greatest focus to those land units closest to the Station (essentially within the ¼ mile radius): land units D3 (the Vornado lot only), 4, and 5 north of the Toll Road (or what we refer to collectively as “TC Metro North”) and south of the Toll Road land units E3, 4, and 5 all currently zoned I4 (or what we refer to collectively as “TC Metro South”).

TC Metro North should become an extension of the TC urban core – rich with nightlife, signature restaurants and retail, perhaps a hotel with convention capability, an augmented office presence, a strong residential component consistent with TOD, and potentially at least one prominent civic use. In combination, these additions to the Town Center will make it a rich and balanced destination-origination station that will be a unique asset to Reston.

TC Metro South should fundamentally change from an essentially suburban office park to a more dynamic urban space – separate and different from Town Center (given the limited north-south crossings over the Toll Road) with its own identity. In addition to more urban office space, we envision a strong residential presence. Supporting retail, hotel, restaurant, and at least one grocer should also mark the space.

Both places should have strong interparcel connectivity and, where appropriate, a more urban grid. All roadways should be complete streets (capable of comfortably handling pedestrian, bicycle, transit-oriented (including bus, though not bus-dedicated lanes), and vehicular travel). Distinctive and robust open spaces (consistent with the guidelines set forth in this report) will improve the quality of life and the working experience and are essential.

Amongst the three stations that are the subject of the Task Force’s consideration, this is the only one without planned subsidized parking for rail access and it is being strongly considered for possible air rights development. It should and we think will develop in a much more robust way in comparison to the other two stations and the community should be specially focused on making it a world-class success. Doing so will in our view be decidedly in the community’s best interests.

Vision

The Committee recommends that the Reston Town Center Metro Station be viewed as a regional destination and origination station. This will be realized by ensuring that its immediate neighborhoods, both north and south, evolve to a more urban, mixed use character with attractive reasons for people to take the Metro to and from this center. The focus first and foremost should be on successfully extending the urban core south to the Metro station. Good things will follow from that.

Organizing Principles

We will discuss separately the individual components of Metro North and South. But the following four organizing principles apply to both:

- **An Urban (not suburban) Character with Intra- and Inter-parcel Connectivity and/or Grid:** Metro North should continue to develop, and Metro South must develop, as an urban, mixed-use space. The zoning designations for the Metro North and South should be changed as needed to accomplish this objective. A fundamental building block for both will be creating interparcel connectivity and, in certain cases, a grid of complete streets. In the case of Metro North, the connections must tie into the existing urban core (with at least ped/bike friendly connectors to Explorer and Library Streets and ultimately realization of the planned “Discovery Street”). For Metro South, that means creation of connections to the planned Kiss and Ride and strong north-south and east-west connectivity at an urban scale. For certain land units (particularly those in E4 and 5) an urban grid with typical urban-sized blocks would seem to make sense. Linking that grid in a way that also enhances east-west connectivity across Reston Parkway would be a plus.
- **1:1 (sq. ft.) Residential:Office:** The Task Force has heard that the best TOD in the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor (that which creates a healthy mix of uses and best mitigates the traffic/congestion impacts) is essentially 1:1 sq. ft. residential:office (with retail and hotel space not considered part of “office”). We think that ratio is an appropriate target for development on any parcel within both Metro North and South that seeks FARs above those currently permitted under the Comprehensive Plan. We note that Town Center as currently built is significantly weighted to commercial over residential. Residential development that any developer proposes above this target (so that Town Center overall can get closer to a 1:1 ratio) should be encouraged if not incented. Put differently, this ratio sets a residential minimum: residential at a higher than 1:1 ratio is permitted (if not encouraged) and matching or any office space is not required.
- **Robust and Diverse Open Space:** Open space is at a premium in Town Center. What we are recommending for Town Center North, if adopted, will help. But the residential and commercial populations will significantly grow if our recommendations for the TC Metro Station area are adopted. That will require a strong commitment to active and passive open space in both Metro North and South to ensure a high quality of

life. Innovative solutions in these urban environments will be needed. The Committee sees two important prerequisites to development of these land bays: an urban plaza in the D4 lot of Metro North and a meaningful town green space of at least 5-8 acres in Metro South. Beyond that, we think parcels that seek additional densities beyond their existing by-right allowances should meet the open-space standards we outline in the body of the report.

- **A Commitment to Excellence in Urban Design and Architecture:** Of course this inevitably becomes a subjective judgment, but our intent in recommending this as one of the four prerequisites for permitting densities higher than are allowed under current zoning is to send a signal to the relevant decision makers that they should demand architecture that reflects sound urban design and signals the sense of place and unique destination this report seeks to encourage. In addition, those responsible for approving design decisions (including any Design Review Board) should adopt and maintain processes that are transparent, provide adequate notice for timely community participation, and have information about their membership, charter and processes, calendar of regular meetings, and published agendas for those meetings that are easily available to and accessible by the public (including on web pages dedicated to these organizations).

To achieve the vision we set forth our partners in the development community must be properly incented. Development within Metro North and South that meets these four criteria – grid, green, balanced residential:office, and excellence in design together with whatever else is required through the normal zoning processes (including proffers) – should be allowed the flexibility to go as high as a 5.0 FAR with building heights up to 350 feet. These increased densities should not attach by right; it is an option that may be permitted if the conditions precedent set forth in this report are met. Zoning should be amended accordingly and only so much as is necessary to achieve approved plans (e.g., a plan that would require increasing densities above existing by-right to, say, a 3.5 FAR should be granted that and not 5.0).⁴

Individual Components

The Committee heard interesting presentations about how Metro North and South might develop:

Metro North: The key to realizing a vision of an extended urban core will be the development of D4. Ideas that generated keen interest included a possible multi-level platform with parking below and mixed use above, potentially bisecting the upper level of the platform with an east-west urban plaza with signature retail on either side. There might be some street parking along that plaza to allow for deliveries and short stops, but traffic would otherwise be funneled to the parking below and then out to Town Center Parkway. In all events the Committee feels, consistent with the open space standards

⁴ Our recommendations for Metro North and South may or may not be appropriate for the extended Reston Parkway Special Study Area. The Committee suggests that those areas be given additional scrutiny in Phase II of the Committee's work.

enunciated above, an urban plaza of some distinction should be a key organizing principle for this parcel. Signature street-level retail along the key connectors in this parcel must also be given high priority consistent with the goal of creating a destination of significance.

Metro South: There were a number of ideas heard for Metro South as well, but these are even less advanced since this area has heretofore been unable to develop residential. There was, however, wide agreement on the concepts of a more urban, mixed use space and one that creates better interparcel connectivity. Where appropriate (e.g., in the E5 and perhaps E4 parcels) an urban grid of streets should be considered. In all events, strong east-west and north-south connectivity will be essential. In addition, the Committee feels that a contiguous central green space of at least 5-8 acres that would be capable of passive and/or programmed or active uses (as the community should decide) is an essential organizing principle for this land bay (defined in greater detail below).

The attached straw man map is illustrative but not prescriptive of certain of these themes. How any of this evolves will be a matter between the developers and County with appropriate community input, as market conditions allow. We do see, however, the following individual components as important to whatever final plans develop.

- **Transportation Infrastructure**

- *Metro North:*

- *Interior and Interparcel Network of Streets/Connections:* A classic urban grid may not make sense in D4. There are a series of roads or connections, however, that the Committee feels should be incorporated into future development thinking:
 - The existing curb cut and traffic signal along Sunset Hills should be utilized for vehicular ingress/egress. This might also become an east-west boulevard through the site potentially leading to parking below (if the platform idea is pursued). Indeed, keeping parking free from the urban plaza that we think will have to develop strikes us as essential.
 - Potentially adding a second ingress/egress off Sunset Hills about one block to the west of the existing curb cut would allow for creation of a north-south spine for the site.
 - The already proffered extension of “Discovery Street” should be completed.
 - The Committee also feels there must be additional north-south connectivity to the existing urban core. Extending vehicular roadways presents serious logistical challenges. That should be considered as demand warrants and resources allow. At a minimum, however, we think there must be ped/bike connectors that essentially extend

Explorer and Library Streets into and connect with whatever street network is created for D4.

- We say “essentially extend” because at least in the near term each may require a slight jog around existing structures (the Sallie Mae parking structure in the case of the Explorer extension and parking along the western edge of Discovery Square with respect to the Library Street extension).
 - In addition, we recognize that each will require an overpass over the W&OD Trail. Depressing the trail at the appropriate locations so these new crossings can be essentially at grade is an outcome the Committee feels deserves special consideration. The cooperation of the Northern Virginia Regional Parks Authority will be needed to achieve these outcomes. We highlight these needs in this report so they may be given the priority we think they require.
 - Effective ped/bike crossings across Bluemont Way will also be required to make these connections work.
 - In terms of interparcel connectivity, the Committee believes it is desirable to provide a functioning east-west connection between D4 and D3 across Town Center Parkway.
 - The Discovery Square and Overlook portions of these lots are not likely to redevelop in the near future. If and as they do the same principles apply – creating a network of connections that ties in with the existing and extended urban core and TC Metro Station. Over time, we see the extended urban core growing organically east and west, so providing for the future tie-in of the D3 and D5 land units into this mix is important.
 - Thinking about this extended urban core more broadly, future planning must accommodate better ped/bike crossings across the four major boulevards that frame or bisect the extended urban core: Reston Parkway, Bluemont Way, Town Center Parkway, and New Dominion Parkway.
- *Bus Circulator:* The Committee *strongly* recommends a bus circulator or linear shuttle connector service from the TC Metro Station through the Town Center District and Town Center North. We see that as an *essential* priority to help minimize vehicular traffic in and through the Town Center District.

- Metro South:
 - *Interior and Interparcel Network of Streets/Connections:* The attached straw man represents some base line thinking about the kinds of connections we see as important throughout Metro South as it evolves from more of a suburban office park to an urban, mixed use area:
 - North-south and east-west spines are critical to the parcels' redevelopment. Edmund Halley should be extended to link with the Kiss and Ride (and, if it is ever built, the Town Center Parkway extension). An east-west spine should be built using the existing right in-right out off Reston Parkway into parcel E5. That should connect with Edmund Halley with consideration being given ultimately to extending it or a parallel road farther west (tying ultimately with South Lakes Road).
 - A more urban grid linking E4 and E5 should likely be pursued. Block size in E5 should probably reflect typical urban dimensions. Depending on the location of the central green and how that impacts design of these spaces these grid requirements should be adjusted accordingly. In all events strong connectivity, if not an urban grid, between and throughout E4 and E5 is essential.
 - The existing ingress/egress points into E5 along Sunrise Valley Drive also present ready opportunities to create north-south roads to further develop the E5 grid.
 - The near- and even long-term expectation is that much of E2 will remain a Federal government campus for the USGS if not others (but see our discussion on open space below). We think extending Edmund Halley directly from the Kiss and Ride into that parcel would provide a more efficient connection with the Metro and help keep additional traffic off the main collector roads (assuming some kind of shuttle service to the Metro).
 - Signalized Intersection on Reston Parkway: JBG and Brookfield have urged that we recommend a signalized, four-way intersection at Reston Parkway utilizing the existing right in-right out into parcel E5. This would provide important east-west vehicular and ped/bike connectivity across Reston Parkway with parcel F1. Although the Committee has not heard from any transportation experts on the subject, both developers have researched the issue and feel strongly that addition of this intersection would help alleviate some of the congestion that occurs at the Reston Parkway/Sunrise Valley intersection (identified as one of the worst congestion points during peak periods in Fairfax County). We

recognize this would create a signalized intersection closer to the Toll Road ramp than VDOT might ordinarily allow. We would urge that VDOT be open to this idea as this area becomes more urban in character. We think the benefits in providing important east-west connectivity and potentially mitigating existing traffic congestion at the Reston Parkway/Sunrise Valley intersection could be significant.

- *Other Transportation Infrastructure Improvements Applicable to both Metro North and South:*
 - *Complete Streets:* All streets within Metro North and South should reflect an emphasis on “complete streets” that will be designed to enable safe access and use for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders (including along planned bus routes). Note also our suggestion in the body of the report that additional consideration be given to creating a hierarchy of streets with assigned characteristics akin to what was done for Tyson’s Corner.
 - *Bicycle Facilities:* Bicycle lanes and facilities – that will enable residents and workers to travel by bicycle on dedicated on-road facilities and make use of bike racks, bike lockers, and other facilities at residential, retail, and commercial areas – should be a priority throughout Metro North and South. Bike sharing should also be given consideration (at least in Metro North).
 - *Pedestrian Connectivity from the Metro Station:* The pedestrian bridge and crossing over the Toll Road envisioned for the TC Metro Station must be accessible 24/7 (with the Metro access area capable of being separately locked off so it does not interfere with this 24/7 access). This will allow at least one important north-south pedestrian link between Metro North and South. Further, this connection must be extended directly into the D4 and E4 lots to allow those using the train a direct connection into the extended urban core to the north and the mixed use development to the south.
 - MWAA has advised the Committee that WMATA has legal concerns with keeping these bridges open 24/7. We think there are ways to overcome those concerns (perhaps leasing the public right of way on the bridge to a public entity that has governmental immunity as but one example). We urge the community leadership to pursue that dialogue with vigor and design a solution that will allow this key access.
 - *Additional Pedestrian Access To/From the Eastern End:* JBG has asked that the Committee recommend an additional pedestrian

- *RMAG:* In addition to the transportation infrastructure improvements recommended here, the RMAG recommendations should be made part of the Comprehensive Plan and aggressively pursued in Town Center and Metro South.
 - *Traffic Analyses:* Future development applications should include detailed traffic, bike, and pedestrian impact analyses that address the transportation impacts of, and possible mitigation measures for, the project.
 - Overall the goal should be to create a much more pedestrian and bicycle friendly experience through Metro North and South. Coupled with a bus circulator or linear shuttle connector in Metro North, and the interparcel network of connections we advocate, this will help ensure that the immediate TC Metro Station area is a more people- and less vehicular-oriented space.
- **Open Space**
 - *Open Space as Centerpiece:*
 - *Metro North:* A signature urban plaza as centerpiece of the D4 development makes good sense. This is the touchdown point in Metro North for those exiting the Metro and should evoke a special sense of place.
 - The plaza, however, cannot be the only open space on this lot (especially if D4 and D5 will ultimately be more tightly knitted together as would seem inevitable as the core grows).
 - One possible asset that the Committee identified is the storm water pond on the Discovery Square lot. Taking advantage of this space and creating a water-oriented open space would provide a different and very interesting type of open space within the core (perhaps analogous to the swan boat experience in Boston's Public Garden).
 - *Metro South:* The Committee believes that a prominent central green or park should be a prime organizing principle for Metro South given the new emphasis on residential (and the County Parks

Authority staff commented on this as a desirable outcome for the area). There are multiple ways to acceptably meet this need:

- One possibility would be to locate a contiguous green space of between 5-8 acres south of Sunrise Valley Drive principally within the E2 parcel. This outcome would require dialogue between the landowners in Metro South and the Federal Government, owner of the USGS site that comprises the E2 parcel. The challenges are obvious: from the need for structured parking (which private developers may be able to provide) to consolidating the Federal office space (where again private developers may be able to assist) and/or engaging in land swaps to meet the Federal needs while freeing up parts of this parcel for critically needed open space. The parallels with TCN are striking: using Edmund Halley as a north-south link from the Metro Kiss and Ride to the north and the central green south of Sunrise Valley, rimmed with new residential. This would allow the rest of Metro South to develop with commercial staying near the Toll Road and tapering down to residential on either side of Sunrise Valley Drive with supporting retail. Our hope would be that, having laid out this vision, the affected parties would immediately begin discussions with the Federal Government to explore this potential.
 - Failing this, the Committee feels that lines of communication should be open with the Federal Government to explore preserving some of the forested area as open space. It may present the possibility of a win-win – augmenting open space in Metro South while still preserving some kind of natural buffer for the Federal property.
 - A ped-bike connection to the Station through the eastern side of this open space would also be desirable to improve access to the Station from residential areas to the south
- Recognizing the inherent challenges in the above option, the alternative is to create a central green of similar dimension principally in parcels E4 and 5 (and perhaps utilizing some land from E3). To achieve that outcome, all options must be on the table to ensure that landowners who contribute to this solution are properly compensated. These options could include tax incentive financing (essentially financing a taking over time), creating a model akin to what we are recommending for residential whereby landowners may be able to trade open space requirements among themselves, to relaxing other open space requirements on those landowners who contribute to this solution.

- How this space would be utilized/programmed would be up to the community to decide through the normal planning processes. We know the County is in need of rectangular ball fields, but we don't think that is appropriate here. We see this, like the space we are recommending in TCN, as more of an urban space with the possibility for multiple, simultaneous passive and active uses.
- Other areas of Reston that will not grow to this kind of density should be looked to for additional ball fields (including, for example, roof space at the other two Metro stations which we would assume are not going to develop to the same kind of densities or building heights envisioned here).
- Consistent with the open space standard we recommend, the central green would be augmented by other pockets of open space along the lines we outline in more detail for TCN. Utilization of roof top space in more public buildings (for example, garage roof tops) will be important. That is an area where we see an opportunity for more hardscape-type facilities – tennis and multi-purpose courts – so that green space on the ground can be maximized.
- In addition, the Committee also feels that the four storm water ponds along the southern edge of Metro South should be utilized to create an interconnected series of parks. Landowners who contribute to the first priority – the contiguous, central green space – should be granted some flexibility in setting aside additional space for this concept of a linear park
- Our straw man map also reflects utilization of space on the E3 parcel to connect a possible central green with the linear park that utilizes the storm water ponds. Our thought is that one of these spaces should be used as a dog run.
 - The Committee received strong input from those currently living in Town Center that providing space for dogs – both waste areas and run areas – is essential. The alternative is that dogs will create significant pressure on and friction with human uses of open green space.
 - These competing needs must be accommodated ideally with separate spaces. This is increasingly a focus of urban planning and needs to be so here given the significant new residential we are proposing for this area.

- *Additional Open Space in Both Areas:* In addition to a signature piece(s) of open space, both Metro North and South would benefit from the kinds of additional open space we identified as possibilities for TCN:
 - Traffic calming measures as open space features;
 - Green pedestrian pathways through blocks;
 - Buffers along individual land units within parcels as appropriate to the unit's function/use; and.
 - Innovative uses of building rooftops for this purpose to increase both the amount and diversity of open space (admittedly perhaps a more difficult thing to accomplish with the kind of building heights that may be necessary here to achieve the development goals we have set out).
 - *Public Art:* The incorporation of public art, especially in an urban plaza or central park and the denser ped/bike linkages, as well as at other major public spaces, should be considered in any future development plan for these areas.
 - **Civic Uses/Facilities**
 - *Metro North:* The Committee feels that addition of a prominent public amenity on the D4 parcel would materially add to the potential for creating this as a true destination station.
 - There has been some preliminary discussion of a possible world-class performing arts center. Another possibility that some on the Committee find interesting is a children's science center (there is not one now in Northern Virginia, and having that within walking distance from the Metro station would seem inherently desirable given the demographic it would serve).
 - The Committee is in no position to define what would best meet the goal of creating a destination station and satisfy community need; that should be defined through a collaborative community-County process. But we mention the examples above as illustrative of the kind of significant scale we think is needed for the civic component here.
 - In all events, future planning for this parcel should take this notion of a prominent public amenity into consideration.
 - *Metro South:* A similar kind of facility on the south side of the Toll Road, within walking distance of the Metro Station, might well help in developing the new identity for Metro South. We don't see this as an area that will have a heavy civic presence, but a signature public facility might help draw attention, foster residential growth, and attract visitors. Consequently, this should also be taken into consideration with future planning for this parcel.

- **Intensity/Density of Development**
 - Residential:Non-residential Intensity: GMU reports that the current jobs:household ratio in the Reston Parkway Special Study Area is approximately 15:1. This roughly converts to a 4:1 sq. ft. ratio (non-residential:residential). As suggested in the lead-in paragraphs in this report, our sense is that a minimum 1:1 sq. ft. residential:office ratio maximizes the chances for successful TOD – creating a rich mix of uses that will mitigate traffic impacts while also incenting the creation of important supporting retail. The Committee feels that going forward new development in Metro North and South must be guided by this 1:1 target.
 - Planning Mechanism: The Committee proposes that any Metro North or South property that is the subject of a zoning application to achieve higher FARs than are currently allowed under existing zoning must meet the four organizing principles identified above, including being balanced at least 1:1 sq. ft. residential:office (it could be more heavily residential with little or no commercial if the developer feels the market will bear it, but if commercial is built the overall development must be at least equal to this target ratio).
 - The application may be that of one or any number of landowners acting jointly or collaboratively within Metro North, Metro South, or some combination from both. In either case (a single or joint application) the organizing principles must be satisfied for the property that is the subject of the application to qualify for the higher densities we recommend.
 - In addition, the residential and non-residential development that is the subject of an approved application need not be built at the same time. By including residential in the approved plans this will essentially create a “residential land bank” that will ensure the residential development gets built once the market allows (if that is not simultaneous with the non-residential components).
 - We recognize that this could allow for a lag between commercial and residential development (if the former develops first). In such cases:
 - The land banks that are designated must have a bona fide chance of becoming residential development once the market allows for that development. Consequently, proposals that keep land fallow and available for residential development once the market allows will be looked at with the highest favor. Those that designate existing commercial buildings as future residential sites will be given heightened scrutiny (given the concern that those buildings might never get redeveloped into the residential that we feel is essential to ensuring healthy mixed use).
 - Second, interim uses for residential (or commercial) land banks would create community benefit (not parking, but

additional open space would be the most prominent example). This should be encouraged. That will come with a price – when it is time to develop the residential units there will be a public uproar over the loss of the interim use. The Committee recognizes this is not easy, but our instinct is that interim uses should be encouraged as opposed to leaving the land fallow (an existing example of land that could have been utilized for an important interim use is Lot 16 in the Town Center District). If leasing that land on a temporary basis to a governmental unit will help minimize liability issues then that should be considered.

- The Committee feels that additional incentives will be needed to encourage the kind of TOD and residential:office balance we envision. Consequently:
 - An additional planning tool that we think should be at the community's disposal is relaxation of the County residential (and commercial) parking requirements. This could both incent creation of residential and the kind of residential (less vehicular-dependent) that we would like to encourage in this area. Consequently, developers should be allowed in this TOD area (Metro North and South) to build residential (and commercial) parking that it believes the market will support. If that is less than the County requirement, so be it. In short, the County parking requirements in this area should be converted from a floor to at best a ceiling if not simply a guideline.
 - Metro South currently has no residential development (prevented by current zoning). To further encourage “first movers” on the residential side the Committee believes that the following incentives should also be considered for those willing to build residential units in Metro South during the first seven (7) years following any zoning change that allows residential development on those parcels:
 - Timing on zoning applications that include residential development should be compressed when possible;
 - Tax relief or incentives should be considered; and
 - Consideration should be given to relaxing contributions for off-site mitigation.

- *FAR and Building Heights:* Many on the Committee feel that FAR limits should not drive development – the County should have the flexibility to approve good applications that are consistent with the vision regardless of what FAR results so long as the infrastructure can handle the application. We recognize, however, that FAR limitations are an inherent part of the existing County scheme. Consequently, and in the interest of ensuring

that FAR limits are set so as not to place a material barrier on good, worthwhile development consistent with this report, the Committee recommends that any Metro North or South zoning application that meets the above criteria (and any other applicable County requirements or proffers made during the application process) should be eligible for a FAR of up to 5.0 including all uses and a building height not to exceed 350'. Similar to what we recommend for TCN, variegated building heights to create a diverse topographical palate should be required. As emphasized at other places in this report, this option for increased densities should not attach by right; it is an option that the County should consider if the conditions precedent to that option are satisfied.⁵

- **Private development in Metro North and South should serve the goals of: (a) creating a well-balanced mix of residential and non-residential uses; (b) adding commercial/office space and targeted retail support for those living and working in and around the Town Center Metro station area and, in the case of Metro North, signature retail that accentuates the potential for this being a regional destination; and (c) augmenting the existing housing stock in ways that creates well-designed living spaces that can accommodate a diverse demographic.**

- Commercial: Commercial (i.e., non-residential outside of retail) should be focused primarily nearer to the Toll Road. We think commercial will naturally gravitate to those locations in any event as is the case now (both because of the advertising potential and because it will be harder to sell residential along the Toll Road). This also creates something of a barrier between the envisioned residential and the Toll Road which is likely to be seen by new residents as a positive.
- Retail: Street-level retail along key connectors will be critical to realizing this mixed use vision. In Metro North, street-level retail around the envisioned urban plaza and along the key pathways in D4 connecting it to the existing urban core must be incorporated into future plans. In Metro South, strong consideration should be given to having retail located near and around the central green and along what are ultimately created as the essential north-south and east-west interparcel connectors.
- Residential: All residential should seek to serve a diverse demographic, consistent with current County guidelines (including workforce and affordable housing) with emphasis on accessibility/visitability.

⁵ We have talked very little about parcels F1 and 2, both of which are within the ½ mile radius of the TC Metro Station. F2 of course was only recently developed, and there is a pending APR nomination for F1. We are reluctant to say without further study that F1 should be subject to the same criteria and benefits we have outlined for Metro North and South. We note, however, that JBG (owner of the land units within these parcels) reported to us that its pending APR for F1 is 1.18:1 residential:non-residential and a mix of uses is proposed. If the nomination also meets the criteria for open space and distinctive architectural design then it may satisfy the organizing principles set forth in this report. (Worth noting also is that F2 has been built out at 1.34:1 residential:non-residential, excluding the hotel space.) We think these parcels should be revisited along with the other parcels that are part of the Reston Parkway Special Study Area for which we have not given guidance.

- **General Guidance for the Remainder of the Town Center District:**
 - The remainder of Town Center is largely built out for the near term. We think it important to state, however, that the existing residential areas within Town Center should remain so. Augmented by the approved concept plan for Spectrum and what we are recommending for TCN, we see these areas combining to form an important and essentially residential collar around the extended urban core (with supporting retail).⁶
 - These areas are currently zoned at 50 dwelling units per acre. Residential development that moves the Town Center District beyond the minimum 1:1 ratio we are recommending for Metro North should be encouraged. Among other incentives the County should consider are permitting density increments above those currently allowed (staying within the tapered approach we are recommending, with highest densities adjacent to the Metro Station and gradually tapering off as one moves north). Any such incremental increases should be used primarily to encourage additional residential (with supporting retail as needed) to continue to shrink the current disparity between available jobs and resident potential workers.
 - With respect to development closer to the Toll Road, individual applications could be considered on a case-by-case basis guided by the general principles we have enunciated for Metro North (again, with allowable densities tapering as one moves farther away from the Metro Station) until those areas are more closely examined.

⁶ We include within this reference the so-called Reston Office Building parcel that abuts Reston Parkway and is otherwise surrounded by the Spectrum parcel. This parcel is not currently within the Town Center District boundary. We think that parcel should be allowed to redevelop in ways that are consistent with and complement the approved Spectrum concept plan (if/as it may be amended) and the Committee's recommendations for an essentially residential collar (with supporting retail) around the extended urban core.

EXHIBIT B

Town Center North (TCN)

(TCN means the approximately 48-acre land bay essentially bounded to the north by Baron Cameron Drive, to the east by Fountain Drive, to the south by the north-central boundary of the Town Center District, and to the west by Town Center Parkway)

Organizing Principles

- The Committee believes TCN should develop into a more urban (not suburban) space with a mix of uses. Although advocating a more urban character the Committee does not believe TCN should become an extension of the Town Center urban core. It should be comparatively less intense.
- Special emphasis should be placed on creating a dynamic open space as the centerpiece of the area and on preserving and expanding civic uses that will support Town Center and more broadly the Greater Reston community.
- The attached "straw man" map reflects this sense of the parcel's future -- an urban-like street grid (with strong "complete streets" that will ensure pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and connectivity) oriented around a large open space or "town green." The addition of a civic center or community hall that might crown the open space received strong Committee support. Other configurations to similar effect are possible (and public planning with the landowners will determine the final configuration), but the straw man is indicative of the Committee's major themes.
- New residential, office, hotel, and institutional uses with street-level retail in targeted areas would likely be focused primarily on the eastern portion of the lot with existing and new civic uses more likely concentrated on the western portion.
- The Committee envisions a strong residential component to any redevelopment of TCN in an effort to achieve greater balance among residential and non-residential uses within the Town Center District.

Individual Components

- **Transportation Infrastructure**
 - Grid of Streets: We propose an urban-style grid of east-west and north-south through streets that will provide access throughout the parcel. On-street parking and shared parking areas among nearby uses should be encouraged.
 - The grid should reflect an emphasis on "complete streets" that will be designed to enable safe access and use for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders.
 - Block size should reflect typical urban dimensions.
 - Traffic calming measures are essential to ensure this is a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly space.
 - Bicycle Facilities: Bicycle lanes and facilities – that will enable residents and workers to travel by bicycle on dedicated on-road facilities and make

use of bike racks, bike lockers, and other facilities at residential, retail, and commercial areas – should be a priority. Bike sharing should also be given consideration.

- *Bus Circulator:* As future land development proceeds along the lines outlined in this report a bus circulator or linear shuttle connector service to improve access to the Town Center Metro Station will be essential.
- *New Dominion Parkway:* New Dominion provides an important collector function connecting the Fairfax County, Reston, and Town Center Parkways. However:
 - Future development applications should evaluate and contribute to measures to improve the at-grade pedestrian/bicycle crossings along New Dominion Parkway.
 - Special focus should be given to the segment between Fountain Drive and Explorer Street, especially if/as the “town green” is incorporated into the space immediately to the north.
 - A “road diet” along that segment, as recommended in the RMAG report, should be pursued (for instance, a narrowing of the street in this section to single lanes east-west with appropriate traffic calming).
 - Creating a strong pedestrian/bicycle crossing at the end of Library Street is essential to provide safe and easy access to the envisioned “town green” space and help complete the north-south connectivity all the way to the Metro Station that the Committee envisions.
- *Traffic Analyses:* Future development applications should include detailed traffic, bike, and pedestrian impact analyses that address the transportation impacts of, and possible mitigation measures for, the project.
 - In addition to the “road diet” suggested for New Dominion Parkway, we think similar changes should be evaluated along Fountain Drive.
 - Overall the goal should be to create a much more pedestrian and bicycle friendly experience north-south from the Metro station all the way to Baron Cameron Drive, thus connecting the constituent elements of the Town Center District. Coupled with a bus circulator or linear connector this will help ensure that the District becomes a more people- and less vehicular-oriented space.

- **Open Space**

- *The “Town Green” as Centerpiece:* Open space within Town Center is at a premium. TCN presents an opportunity to help address that issue and this should be an important goal.
 - The Committee believes it makes sense to replace part or all of the current FCPA 5-acre park abutting Fountain Drive (a steeply sloped parcel with significant subsurface rock, providing additional challenges and costs for its development) with a +/- 5-7 acre

contiguous⁷ open space that is flatter and is both more centrally located within the overall parcel and closer to the Town Center urban core. This would serve multiple goals:

- Allows greater flexibility to meet whatever the FCPA and community ultimately decide are the best utilizations of open space in TCN (its flatter character and size could accommodate both some active and passive uses; the ultimate uses, of course, will be defined through the normal collaboration among the County, Reston's recreational entities, developers, and the residential community). At a minimum, some kind of tot lot-like facility should be located within TCN;
 - Provides a centerpiece around which the rest of the parcel may be oriented and creates the potential of a powerful north-south visual and physical connection from the Town Center Metro Station (using Library Street as an important north-south connector); and
 - Enhances the possibility of street-level retail at intersections along Fountain Drive to complement the approved Spectrum concept plan.
- A north-south orientation of this open space (along the lines envisioned in the attached concept map) would maximize southern sun exposure, an important consideration. This consideration should help in guiding building height decisions especially on the south and west edges of this open space.
 - Any zoning application(s) for this area should define the location, size, and maintenance responsibility for the central green space along the lines recommended in this report. For any zoning application that incorporates less than all of the central green area, the applicant(s) must: (a) demonstrate how the proposed development will allow for (and not preclude) the phased augmentation and implementation of the central green space, and (b) provide notice to neighboring landowners (if any) who are part of the solution proposed in the individual zoning application so they can participate in that process and provide the County with the full context to evaluate the feasibility/desirability of the solution proposed.
 - We note that the central green depicted on the straw man includes private land outside the TCN southern boundary. That parcel (the so-called Library Park parcel) is by deed intended to serve as some kind of open space so this should be achievable. This would create an entrance to the park via Library Street that would be directly accessible from the Town Center urban core with no intervening development. In addition, it would complete the intended aesthetic

⁷ The green space may be bifurcated by roads as depicted in the straw man. But it should otherwise be essentially contiguous if not entirely so.

of looking north on Library Street and being able to see the park and crowning civic center without buildings that would impair that view.

- *Additional Open Space:* The Committee's further sense is that consideration should be given to augmenting this larger open space area, consistent with the open space standards set forth in the body of the report, with other pockets of open space that are pedestrian accessible.

Examples include:

- Traffic calming measures as open space features;
 - Softening of the edges along east-west through streets;
 - Green pedestrian pathways through blocks;
 - Buffers along individual lots as appropriate to the lot's function/use; and.
 - Innovative uses of building rooftops for this purpose to increase both the amount and diversity of open space.
- *Public Art:* The incorporation of public art within the "town green" (if not elsewhere) should be considered in any future development plan for this area.

- **TCN as an Important Center for Civic Uses/Facilities**

- *Government Services:* The existing County offices and services (Supervisor's office, other North County government, the Regional Library, and Health and Human Services) should remain in TCN. Consolidation of these government functions should be encouraged both for convenience and to maximize the TCN footprint.
 - In that vein, the idea of a civic center or community hall that crowns the large open space is an idea that has meaningful support among the Committee.
 - The Committee sees a strong opportunity to augment these existing facilities/services with an expanded library (more appropriate to the population it serves), a recreational center, and perhaps a performing arts center. Again, consolidation of more than one of these uses should be encouraged.
 - As part of a library expansion strong consideration should be given to relocating it to allow for the creation of the larger open space or "town green" that the Committee envisions.
 - Community input was received about the possible need for an urban elementary/middle school within TCN. Recognizing that TCN cannot accommodate all civic functions needed to serve the area, the Committee nonetheless believes that TCN would be one possible and appropriate location for that kind of use if and as demand warrants.
- *Embry Rucker Community Shelter:* The Shelter is an important part of the Town Center fabric. Whatever redevelopment occurs should accommodate the Shelter's continued location within Town Center.

- *The Police Station and Fuel Depot:* The Committee feels strongly that a police station presence should continue to be a part of Town Center. It feels equally strongly that this presence should be consistent with the new urban paradigm we envision.
 - The Committee received an extensive presentation from those working with the police on design of a new station. The current plan, the culmination of a two-year internal County dialogue on the subject, has already been adapted consistent with certain of the themes set forth in this report, which the Committee greatly appreciates. The revised plan envisions a new two-story station on the existing police station site. It accommodates the Committee's grid concept and accepts that Cameron Glen Drive will be a through street (it was not in the original County plans).
 - The Committee is alert and sensitive to the security concerns that are driving the County's current vision of a stand-alone, no-more-than two-story building with adequate buffering. Our report accommodates the County's current vision but over time as needs and demands for scarce County land increase it is the Committee's sense that an even more urban solution may eventually be required.
 - In that regard we note that TCN's build out to the full vision suggested here may take 20 or more years. Accommodating the police near term according to the current County dialogue may not be the preferred solution for everyone but it does not preclude a more urban solution in the future as TCN becomes more fully developed.
 - As to the fuel depot, the County indicated that the police need an on-site facility to provide the most efficient service to the community without compromising safety. The broader Committee concern is that this facility currently serves a broad array of County uses (including school buses) that do not implicate response time and other security issues. In addition, parking of the buses on this site greatly expands the needed footprint. During its presentation to the Committee, as these concerns were discussed, the County offered to reconsider this issue to determine if alternative solutions are available that would be more consistent with an urban remaking of this space. The Committee appreciates and encourages that reconsideration. Land in this area will become increasingly valuable and any steps that can be taken to maximize the available footprint should be given careful consideration.
- Land use decisions the County makes for its property in TCN should be preceded by an opportunity for adequate and timely community input.

- **Private development in TCN should serve the goals of: (a) creating a well-balanced mix of residential and non-residential uses; (b) adding commercial/office space and targeted retail shopping support for those living and working in and around Town Center; and (c) augmenting the existing housing stock in ways that creates well-designed living spaces that can accommodate a diverse demographic.**

- Commercial: Office, hotel, and institutional should be focused primarily on the eastern portion of TCN.
- Retail: We see an opportunity for targeted street-level retail to help animate the intersections along Fountain Drive and thus complement the approved concept plan for the Spectrum lot, as well as along edges of the conceived “town green.”
- Residential: The Committee’s broader vision for Town Center – extending the Urban Core to the Town Center Metro Station to the south, thus ensuring that this Metro station is a true “destination station” – is an important factor here. There must be a healthy mix of uses, including a strong residential component, in and around the extended urban core to make that vision viable.
 - Within TCN, we feel the residential component should seek to serve a diverse demographic, consistent with current County guidelines (including workforce and affordable housing).
 - The Committee believes that some emphasis should be given to locating housing for our seniors in this space – given its walking-distance proximity to important health, government, and retail resources. For that and other reasons new housing should emphasize accessibility/visitability.
 - And the 1,000 residential unit minimum here (discussed below) should be seen empathically as that. The goal should be maximizing residential here and in the collar surrounding the extended urban core. We note for perspective this space is zoned at 50 dwelling units per acre, which could allow ultimately the construction of +/- 2,000 residential units in this land bay.

- **Intensity/Density of Development**

- Vision: The Committee does not believe TCN can or should be conceived as an extension of the density/intensity of the Town Center urban core. It should be more of a transition space that while becoming more urban in character remains less intensely developed (as compared to the Town Center urban core).
- Non-residential:Residential Intensity: TCN currently is planned for a mix of uses (including governmental, institutional, residential, office and retail) at up to the equivalent of 0.7 non-residential FAR and 50 dwelling units per acre. This intensity/density is generally consistent with the approved Concept Plan for the adjacent Spectrum property.
 - The Committee feels that development up to that level of intensity/density should provide logical parcel consolidation that

will allow for (and not preclude) the phased implementation of the vision for a transportation infrastructure (urban grid of complete streets) and connected open spaces set forth in this report.

- The Committee further believes that non-residential intensity within TCN may be increased up to 0.9 FAR **provided that** in addition to the transportation and infrastructure pieces identified above there is a minimum of 1,000 dwelling units required as part of the overall development plan. Such a provision will ensure that a mix of uses with a substantial residential component is provided.
- We feel this tiered approach will realize the vision of a mixed use space that has the necessary infrastructure (transportation and open space) to support that intensity while at the same time achieving the kind of non-residential:residential balance that we think is important to realize the goal of transit-oriented development in and around what will be the Town Center Metro Station.
- *Building Heights:* Current zoning generally permits building heights of up to 185' for TCN and 275' for the urban core (or a 2/3 ratio).
 - Continuing an upper limit on building heights was an issue that generated meaningful differences among the Committee. Nonetheless, and consistent with our view that TCN should be a transitional space (not an extension of the Town Center urban core), a consensus emerged that building heights across TCN should not be permitted to exceed 200' above grade.
 - The Committee also feels there should not be uniformity of building heights across the space, thus creating a more variegated look and feel. We think this will get addressed organically (the product of market conditions, different uses, and the slope of the parcel). Still, ensuring a variegated look and feel with respect to the overall parcel is an issue that should be taken into account in approving future development plans.

Minority Report of Committee Member Joe Stowers
[to be inserted once editing is complete]